The Wreck of the **WINTERTON**, *East Indiaman,*

TEGG & CASTLEMAN'S EDITION.

NARRATIVE

OF

THE LOSS

OF THE

WINTERTON

EAST INDIAMAN,

WHICH WAS WRECKED

OFF THE ISLAND OF MADAGASCAR,

AUGUST 20th, 1792.

"Down on the vale of death, with dismal cries
"The fated victims shudd'ring, roll their eyes
"In wild despair—while yet another stroke
"With deep convulsion, rends the solid oak."

Falconer.

WRITTEN BY THE THIRD MATE.

LONDON:

Printed for TEGG & CASTLEMAN,
At the Eccentric Book Warehouse, 122, *St. John-Street, Smithfield*; J. BELCHER, Birmingham; B. SELLICK, Bristol; T. TROUGHTON, Liverpool; E. PECK, Lower Ousegate, York; T. BINNS, Leeds; J. MITCHEL, Newcastle; J. DINGLE, Bury St. Edmunds; T. BROWN, Bath; M. SWINDELLS, Manchester; J. RAW & J. BUSH, Ipswich; J. BOOTH, Norwich; B. C. COLLINS and C. FELLOWS, Salisbury; G. WILKINS, Derby; T. BROWN, North Bridge, Edinburgh; and sold by every other Bookseller in the United Kingdoms.

Hartnell, Printer, 3, New-Street, Borough.

[PRICE SIXPENCE.]

SHIPWRECK

OF THE

WINTERTON

EAST-INDIAMAN.

THE WINTERTON, *Captain Dundas*, sailed from Gravesend the 10th of March, 1792, and from the Downs, the 4th of April following: after a fine wind down channel, we cleared the land on the 11th, and bid adieu to old England. Before I enter upon the detail of this unfortunate transaction, I deem it prudent to observe, that our Commander, *Captain Dundas*, was a man of considerable experience; he had also been to India in the same capacity before; and, to do him justice, he was diligent, punctual, and a good seaman.

No accident worth mentioning happened to us on our passage to the Cape, where

we arrived the 20th of July, and remained till the 1st of August, when, having completed our water and other necessaries in False Bay, we sailed at day-light, with a fresh breeze at N. W. with which we shaped our course to the S. E. for two days, when the wind shifted, and became variable, between the South and East, blowing fresh till the 9th, when a S. W. wind succeeded, of short continuance, for it soon returned to the S. E. It was *Captain Dundas's* intention, on leaving the Cape of Good Hope, to take the outer passage for India; but the winds, as has been stated above, inclining so much from the S. E. obliged him to deviate from his original purpose; and on the 10th he accordingly bore away for the Mosambique Channel. Being baffled with light variable winds and calms for some days, our progress was inconsiderable, but on the 19th, (Sunday) a S. W. sprung up, which we had reason to believe was the regular monsoons, being then, to the best of my recollection, (as no Journals were saved) in 25 S. lat.

Captain Dundas, before he stood to the Northward, in order that he might avoid the shoal, named the Bassas de Indias, so uncertainly laid down in our charts, wished to make the Island of Madagascar somewhere

where near St. Augustin's Bay. With a view to accomplish this end, we steered East by compass, from noon of the 19th till midnight, when I relieved the second Officer: the Captain was then on deck, and altered the course to E. N. E. It may be proper here to observe, that *Captain Dundas* had two time-pieces, one of which had served him in his former voyage, and by it he had constantly made the land to the greatest degree of exactness. From these, and from several sets of lunar observations, taken four days before, the whole of which was in coincidence with the time-pieces, he at midnight concluded with confidence, that he was 80 miles from the nearest part of the coast.

From 12 P. M. till 2 A. M. we steered E. N. E. when the Captain came again on deck, and observing the lower steering sail to lift, ordered me to keep the ship N. E. by E. the wind at that time was S. S. E. a moderate breeze, the ship going six knots, and a clear star light night.

Every attention possible was paid to the look-out, *Captain Dundas* with a night glass carefully looking in the direction of the land; but so perfectly was he satisfied with the correctness of his time-pieces, that he never mentioned sounding. A little before

three o'clock, he pointed out to me the ship's place on a chart, which was then upwards of 60 miles from the land, and when he left the deck at three, directed me to steer N. E. at the same time observing, that on that course we could not make more than six miles of Easting before daylight, and that if we were nearer the land than he supposed, it was impossible to avoid seeing it before any accident could happen.

He had not been off the deck more than seven or eight minutes, when the ship struck, going between six and seven knots; the shock was scarcely perceptible, except to the man at the helm; the water was perfectly smooth; no breakers or surf were heard; and, notwithstanding the clearness of the horizon, the land was not discernible. —Thus circumstanced, it being then new moon, with the concurrence of high water, were events particularly unfortunate. The jolly boat and yawl were immediately got out, and not 100 yards a-stern found five fathom water; the sails were immediately thrown a-back, and every endeavour was, at this momentous period, used to get the ship off, but without success.

The kedge anchor, with a nine-inch hawser, was then carried out into five fathom, by which we strove to heave her off,

off, without effect. The sails were next handed, top-gallant yards and masts struck, the long-boat got out, the booms rafted alongside, and upper deck entirely cleared.

Day-light discovered to us our situation; we found the ship was on a reef of rocks, about six miles from the land; within the outer reef, and nearly half way to the shore was another, which at high water was covered.

That on which the ship struck extended as far to the northward as we could see, and to the southward nearly the length of St. Augustin's Bay. As the water ebbed, the ship thumped violently, and began to leak; the recruits were set to the pumps, where they continued as long as they could be of service. By eight o'clock the rudder was beat off, the sheething came up alongside, and there were only eight feet water under her bows; but as she then lay quiet, we entertained hopes of being able to get her off with the next high tide. After breakfast, I was ordered on the gun deck, to get the guns overboard, which were taken one at a time, by the long-boat, and dropt at some distance from the ship, that she might not strike on them, when she should again be elevated by the tide; at the same time a party was employed upon

deck,

deck, in heaving up the rudder and securing it along side. I had got about half the guns away, when the sea breeze setting in fresh, occasioned such a surf, that the boats could not continue alongside: We, however, kept lightening the ship, by heaving overboard such heavy articles as would float; and at three o'clock in the afternoon, when it was high water, made every endeavour to heave the ship off, but they were fruitless.

Finding the ship irrecoverably lost, the next object, of the most interesting attention, became the safety of the lives of the crew and passengers; and that an end so important might as well be accomplished as surrounding difficulties would permit, every nerve was strained to keep the ship together as long as possible; the masts were cut away, by which the ship was much eased; what spars remained from the effects of a heavy surf were stored *inboard*, for the purpose of constructing rafts. Our situation was now truly melancholy; the ship was likely to float a wreck, for all our endeavours could but prove abortive in our situation while every circumstance was so strong against us; however we determined to do our best. So we collected together a quantity of beef, bread, liquors, with other articles

articles of a similar nature, some barrels of gunpowder, and musquets; in fine, whatever was judged most necessary, was put into the long boat; and that no lives might be lost, through the unhappy infatuation of intoxication, to which sailors are prone in such awful scenes as were now before us, every cask of spirits that could be got at was stove. At sun set, the yawl, with the second mate and purser, was sent on shore, to seek a convenient place for us to land at; and the other boats, with some of our people to watch them, were moored astern of the ship, at such a distance as was judged sufficiently clear of the surf for the night. *Captain Dundas* observed the latitude at noon, and found the place where the ship was, to be about 63 miles north of St. Augustin's Bay, in the Island of Madagascar.

In the course of the evening, he assembled the people together, and addressed them in a short speech, acquainting them of the situation of the ship, the route they were to take after getting on shore, the great probability of meeting a ship at St. Augustin's Bay; but above all insisting on the absolute necessity of paying the strictest attention and obedience to the commands of their officers; at the same time assuring them of

his

his assistance and advice; and intimating to them, that it was not less his duty, than his determination, to abide by the ship, until he was convinced that a possibility existed of every one getting on shore: this manly and exhilarating address, failed not of producing an adequate effect in the minds of those to whom it was directed; it was returned with three cheers, and their united affirmations of their desire to acquiesce at all times with his and his officers commands. About midnight a general alarm was excited by the cries of people in distress; and upon repairing on deck, we had the mortification to see our Three boats dashed to pieces by the violence of the surf, the wind having increased during the night, which occasioned it to break much farther out than was expected; and it was not without anguish and horror, that we beheld the poor fellows in the boats, endeavouring to reach the ship, while the violence of the surf seemed to preclude all possibility of it: with the utmost exertions of those on board, we only could save three out of ten; many in the instant of grasping a rope, were drove far out of sight, and met inevitable death. Thus we were deprived of the only probable means of getting on shore, whilst at the same time, the ship beating so heavy

on

on the rocks, that it was doubtful with many, whether she would hold together till morning. The trepidation we were under during the few hours of darkness can better be conceived than described; and the horrors of the night were increased by the ignorance of our true situation.

At day light on the 21st, we immediately set about making rafts of what spars and planks we had, and payed the cables overboard, to get at some that were on the orlop-deck: we also cut the beams of the poop, shoared the deck up, and got it ready for a raft. About 9 A. M. the yawl with the utmost difficulty rowed off, through an immense surf, and soon afterwards came within hail, but was desired to keep at a distance, as she could not safely come alongside: they said the beach was every where alike, a surf covering it as far as they had seen. The boat in a short while afterwards went on shore, and we saw no more of her for several days. In the forenoon three or four rafts left the ship, with near eighty people, who, we saw, got safe on shore.

The unhappy fate of the boats rendered the situation of those that remained on board extremely precarious; and producing the strong and irresistible feeling of self-

self-preservation in every breast, made *Capt. Dundas* waver from his original declaration to the men: he therefore, at this critical moment, expressed his wish to accompany the Ladies on shore, whose forlorn condition he might have had it in his power in some degree to alleviate; but from this intention he was diverted, and was persuaded to remain on board till it was too late.

The sea-breeze this day was much stronger than before, consequently the surf became much heavier. In the evening it increased so violently as to part the hawser which held the ship stern-to; about sunset she drove broadside on, upon the rocks, the sea making a breach entirely over her. At seven she parted at the chestree, when every body crouded off, on the quarter deck and poop: at this juncture I saw *Captain Dundas* for the last time on the poop with the Ladies: Mr Chambers, tho' repeatedly urged to attempt to save his life, remained inactive, declaring that he was sensible all his efforts would be in vain, and with a perfect resignation to his fate, requested every one to watch over his own safety. Amidst a scene, perhaps, as pregnant with misery, distraction, and with horror, as any that ever occurred in the eventful history of mariners, the ship soon

after breaking up, I, accompanied with the fourth and fifth mates, left the wreck on a small raft we had constructed for the purpose, and were rapidly wafted from our ill-fated ship, beyond the reach of the piercing cries of misery, which issuing from considerably more than two hundred people, involved in the most complicated affliction, may be imagined, but cannot with any justice be painted by me, whose feelings shrink from the remembrance of such distress.

After driving all night in the supposition that we should soon get on shore, we were miserably deceived on the approach of daylight when we could see no land; however, knowing how it lay, we laboured hard, and about three o'clock on the 22d, got on shore.

Proceeding to the southward, we found the poop had driven on shore with sixty people on it, among whom were five of the ladies, and several gentlemen, who, particularly the former, were, from the variety of distress they had undergone, objects of commiseration and pity; they could not give any account of the Captain; but I have since learned from the carpenter, that after the poop went away, the starboard side of the wreck floated broadside up, and *Captain*

Dundas was washed thro' the quarter gallery, and seen no more. The rest of the people got on shore, some on small pieces of the wreck, others in canoes, in which the natives came off to plunder the remains of the ship, but it was not till Sunday the 26th, that the last of them landed. Many things drove on the beach, but whatever was of any value, the natives secured, threat'ning every one who attempted to oppose them with death, and whenever they met with an opportunity, they plundered and stripped our people.

This disposition of the natives, with the loss of our boats, rendered it utterly impossible to save any part of the treasure or cargo. In a few days the whole of the survivors arrived at Tulliar, the residence of the King of Baba, to whom every praise and credit is due, for his kind and humane treatment to us, from our first arrival till the melancholy and reduced number of the Winterton's crew were taken off the island.---*Capt. Dundas*, Mr Chambers, three young Ladies, with seamen and soldiers to the amount of forty-eight were drowned. For some days we remained in a state of the most anxious suspence, for the fate of the yawl, as it was on her safety alone we could found the most distant hope of relief, as the season

season was so far advanced as to preclude the probability of any vessel touching at the Bay till the next year. Her arrival at length in the River of Tulliar, relieved us from the most painful anxiety. We got her up to the town, and kept a guard over her, to prevent the natives setting fire to her, which they certainly would have done, (for the iron work) had it been at any distance from the King's residence.

At a consultation of the officers, it was agreed, that I should go to Mosambique, to procure a vessel, and that every person should exert himself to get the boat in readiness as soon as possible. From want of tools, &c. the carpenters were unable to do any thing more than put a false keel upon her, and with the burthen board rose her about five inches forwards. As to sails we managed tolerably well. Most fortunately, a compass had been put in the boat the evening of the 20th of August, and a quadrant had been picked up on the beach, but we could not procure a chart, or a single book of navigation; a small geographical grammar, which I obtained from one of the soldiers, was in the end the saving of our lives. By the 12th of September, having got every thing ready, I sailed from Tulliar Bay, having with me the fourth of-

ficer, four seamen, and Mr. de Souza, a passenger, who, from his knowledge of the Portugueze language offered to accompany me. For two days we made pretty good progress to the northward, having pleasant westerly winds, but then it shifted to N. N. E. and never returned again fair. What added considerably to our disappointment was, that our small stock of provisions, which consisted of cakes made of Indian corn and beef, proved entirely rotten and maggotty; so that our whole subsistence was some raw sweet potatoes and sugar-cane, with half a pint of water a man per day; for though we had about twenty-five gallons of it when we sailed, yet owing to a great part of it being kept in calibashes, many of them broke with the motion of the boat.

Thus situated, on the 20th of September we made the coast of Africa, nearly in the latitude of 18° S. the currents having set us considerably further to the Westward than we imagined. For three days, we endeavoured to get to the Northward, but could gain nothing, the Wind keeping constantly in the N. E. and by that time, having but a very slender stock of water left, it was judged imprudent to persist any longer in the design of reaching Mosambique

in the condition we were; accordingly we bore away for a Portuguese settlement, named Sofala, situated in 20½ south latitude, to which our little book directed us.

I cannot help remarking in this place how unfortunate it was for us all, that the only book of charts saved from the wreck, should be deficient in but one chart, and that to be the only one of them which was wanted *viz.* of the Mosambique channel; as at the time that we relinquished the intention of getting to Mosambique, we were no more than 20 miles distant from a seaport named Killeman, where vessels are at all times trading to the capital. Had we known this, it would have been the means of procuring immediate relief for our distressed shipmates, and thereby have prevented the loss of so many lives, occasioned by their long stay on the island. Ignorant as we were, I belive nothing but the dread of absolute starving would have induced us to land on any part of the coast, though we afterwards found our fears were imaginary, notwithstanding, that barbarous idea which the Poruguese have endeavoured to instil into the minds of the natives, that all other European nations are cannibals, and do not scruple to eat black people.

But to return, in our run for Sofala, we

put into two rivers, in both of which we imagined it to lay; in the last, meeting some inhabitants who spoke Portuguese, they advised us to apprise the Governor of our wish to reach the place. On receiving notice of this, he instantly dispatched a letter, with a most seasonable supply of victuals, and a pilot to conduct us into Sofala, where we arrived the 29th of September. By the means of Mr. de Souza, we made the Governor fully acquainted with the unhappy disaster that had befallen us, and at the same time requested his advice and assistance, in what manner it would be proper for us to act: Our reception was perfectly humane and kind; he desired us not to think for a few days of any thing but recruiting ourselves, and at the same time furnished us with clothes, which he observed our situation so much required; though still there was a shyness in his behaviour, which we could not account for. I am inclined to think, and we were all of the same opinion, that he certainly doubted our veracity, and took us for part of the crew of some French ship come to kidnap the natives; though our ragged and squalid appearance by no means justified such an apprehension.

In a little time, however, these suspicions vanished,

vanished, and then he informed us of the state of the place: that there was annually but one vessel came there, that she had sailed about a month before, and would not arrive again till June; that as the N. E. monsoon was set in, it would be impracticable to reach Mosambique at that time, but that if we chose, he would give us guides, and what was necessary to undertake a journey to Senna, a settlement of theirs inland, from whence we might have an opportunity of getting to the capital; though at the same time he represented the undertaking in so unfavourable a light, together with the length of time likely to intervene before any occasion might present itself for us to proceed further, that, on mature deliberation, we declined all thoughts of it, and turned our attention to a boat he had, about the size of an Indiaman's long-boat, which we made application for; this he made some scruple of granting, on account of the payment, which was soon set aside by our offering to grant a bill on the Honourable East-India Company for the amount; this he, after some deliberation, declined, and at length made us a present of the boat.

Having, through the interest of the Governor, procured every thing requisite for

our voyage, we sailed the 12th of October; but our evil fortune had not yet left us, for we had been only three days at sea, during which time we had constantly foul winds, and had not proceeded more than 40 miles; when the boat proved so extremely leaky; that, with our utmost exertions, we could scarcely keep her above water. I will not attempt to describe the various and wonderful escapes from impending danger we experienced 'till we regained Sofala, which was not till the 20th of October, though so little distant from it. Our reception now was widely different to that on our first arrival there; indeed we were perfectly astonished at the great change, as no just cause existed for such behaviour, the Governor scarcely deigning to speak to us, sent for me and Mr. Wilton, the fourth officer; and without ever enquiring into the reason of our putting back, or with what difficulties we had met on the passage, gave us to understand, that he was making ready to dispatch some letters for Killeman, and that we must immediately hold ourselves in readiness to accompany the messenger who carried them. It was in vain that we represented our debilitated and unhealthy state, from the various and unremitting fatigues we had lately undergone---in vain we urged

the

the necessity of rest to recruit our broken constitutions, for he remained inexorable to all our solicitations. We next requested of him some kind of conveyance; after a short pause, he offered us a sort of pallanquin, but positively refused any assistance to Mr. de Souza, or the seamen. This was rejected with indignation by us, as an invidious distinction, and having provided ourselves with some cloth, to purchase subsistence on our journey, we left Sofala on the 1st of November.

By the 20th of the same month we had travelled upwards of two hundred miles, through a miserable tract of country, very thinly inhabited, (probably the consequence of the Slave Trade at Mosambique) sometimes for 40 miles not a hut or creature to be seen; the precaution we took of surrounding ourselves with fire at night, prevented accident from the numerous species of wild beasts, with which the country abounds. But now the excessive heat of the climate, added to the fatigue we experienced, in being obliged to travel during the heat of the day, wholly overpowered us, and for a fortnight we remained in a most deplorable state, when the Governor of Senna, hearing we were on the way, dispatched Pallanquins for us, and on the

6th

6th of December we arrived there. Here every care and attention was paid to us, and we received what medical assistance the place afforded; but notwithstanding, two of the seamen, and Mr. Wilton, fourth mate, a most worthy, active, and able young officer, died during our stay.

On the first notice of a vessel being ready to sail, the remainder of our party left Senna, and in a few days arrived at Killeman, where we embarked on board a sloop, and the 12th of February, 1793, M. de Souza and myself reached Mosambique, five months after leaving Madagascar.

On our arrival there, we immediately waited on the Governor, and detailed to him the loss of the Winterton, as well as every circumstance that had occurred since our departure from the Island of Madagascar. I informed him, likewise, that I had been deputed by my unfortunate shipmates and friends, to solicit the aid of the Mosambique government; I requested him, therefore, as much in an official as an individual capacity, to send a vessel for the relief of those in whose behalf I intreated his assistance. He answered, that he felt every inclination to relieve my companions, but was prevented from acting up to his intentions, as there was no ship belonging

to

to her Majesty, the Queen of Portugal, in the harbour.

In this situation of affairs, I considered myself impowered, from the official employment I then filled, (being late Third Mate of the Winterton,) in the name of the Honourable East-India Company, to endeavourt to freight a private vessel to the Island of Madagascar; and I should consider myself deficient in justice, were I here to omit making grateful acknowledgment of the very liberal conduct and energetic aid of the Governor, which enabled me soon to equip the ship completely for her intended voyage to Madagascar.

On the 1st of March I sailed from Mosambique; and after a tedious passage of twenty-three days, (owing to light winds) safely anchored in St. Augustine's Bay. I repaired immediately to Tulliar, to inform my poor unfortunate companions, that at length a vessel was arrived, and then ready for their reception. I must again be permitted to observe, that my abilities are unequal (and probably the power of human language is inadequate) to paint the miserable state in which I found the whole of the survivors. Overwhelmed with mental affliction, their calamities were surprisingly encreased, by the discovery of a malignant

malignant fever: as no kind of the surgical stores had been saved from the wreck, these unfortunate people were entirely destitute of medicines to endeavour to alleviate its deadly effects; and besides which, being deprived of the necessaries of life they had been accustomed to, the number of people, including the passengers, was reduced to one hundred and thirty, though nearly double that number was saved from the wreck. Under circumstances so peculiarly severe, from the emaciated condition of the crew, it was ten days before their embarkation was entirely completed, notwithstanding I had used my utmost exertions to expedite so desirable an event. With this unhappy remnant of my friends and fellow-sufferers, I sailed from Madagascar the 3d of April, and on the 11th returned to Mosambique; during our passage, the worst of the people died, and in eight days we lost seven, two of whom were passengers.

I should be wanting in gratitude, as well as deficient with regard to truth, to which I have hitherto adhered with all possible exactness, did I not take this opportunity of representing to the Honourable East-India Company in particular, and my countrymen at large, the flattering reception we met with from the Governor and inhabitants of Mosam-

Mosambique, who surveyed our forlorn condition with sentiments that do honour to their humanity, prepared an hospital for the reception of our sick, and continually vied with each other in every soothing attention to the Ladies: though the sick received every medical assistance possible to be procured, yet the unsalubrious climate of Mosambique retarded the establishment of their health; and during a stay of two months there, about thirty more of my companions died, whilst I had the mortification to observe, that the sickness of the survivors continued. As no ship belonging to the Government of Portugal had arrived in the harbour, the Governor was as inadequate to produce us a vessel, as he was when my requisition regarding this interesting subject was formerly made; I therefore, in conjunction with Mr Dunn, Purser of the Winterton, and Lieut. Brownrigg, of his Majesty's 75th regiment, was reduced to the alternative of again freighting a private vessel in the name of the Honourable East India Company, in order to transport us to Madras. On the 10th of June we took our leave of Mosambiqe; and on the 13th anchored at Joanna, with an intention of procuring provisions, and furnishing ourselves with other conveniences. Having accom-

plished our ends, we left the island the 19th, after experiencing from its generous inhabitants every aid in their power, and every attention which humanity could dictate. It was at this period when we concluded every difficulty surmounted, a fond but delusive hope began to dawn upon our minds, and we anticipated a safe and expeditious passage to Madras, when, on the 7th of July, in the lat. of 5 deg. 40 min. north, and long. 63 east, we were captured by the Le Mutin, a French Privateer from the Isle of France. We were entirely ignorant of the commencement of hostilities between Great Britain and France, by which our vexatious disappointment encreased.

Having taken Lieut. Brownrigg, myself, with twenty-two seamen and soldiers, on board the privateer, they put an officer, with a number of their own people into our vessel, with orders to conduct her to the Mauritius with all possible haste. Thus situated, the privateer immediately proceeded on her cruize; and, although hurt at our accumulated distresses, we received every polite attention from the French Captain and his officers, far exceeding what has been felt by many of our countrymen who have been since captured by the Republicans. The privateer continued her cruize

'till

'till the 15th of July, on which day she entered the Road of Tutecorin, where she fell in with and engaged a Dutch Indiaman, (the Ceylon, Capt. Muntz,) and after an action of about fifteen minutes, the Dutchman proved victorious, and the privateer struck her colours, to the great satisfaction of myself and brother prisoners.

Our old Allies, (the Dutch) were happy in the opportunity of liberating Englishmen from confinement; and Capt. Muntz insisted upon our partaking of a handsome entertainment on board the Ceylon, during which I recounted the leading features of our trying and continued misfortunes.--We then repaired to Ballamcotah, and after remaining there a few days, an order came to prepare a large boat for our conveyance to Madras, where we arrived in perfect safety, on the 20th of August, 1793, being the same day twelve-months after our unfortunate shipwreck.

Of the fate of the survivors of the passengers and crew of the Winterton, all that the most diligent inquiry can obtain is, that each took the course that best suited his present situation. I embarked, (together with several of my unhappy friends,) on board the Scorpion sloop of war, then lying at Madras, homeward bound. Dur-

ing our passage, we were chased by a large French frigate, but escaped by superior sailing; and in about a week after, fell in with two line of battle ships, when we certainly should have been taken, had not a gale of wind sprung up and enabled us to escape.—Nothing material occurred after this, except foul winds and continual calms, which so retarded our progress, that the Government, as well as the East-India Company, had every reason to suppose that the Scorpion had either foundered at sea, or was taken by the enemy, However, we at length arrived in safety on British ground: and so eager were the poor fellows to see their different relatives, that they got on shore at the Land's end, first receiving protections from the Captain of the sloop.

Of the fate of those poor fellows that remained on board their own vessel, when taken by the Le Mutin, and ordered to steer for the Mauritius, no kind of intelligence has ever been received in this country, notwithstanding the most diligent and indefatigable search was set on foot, by the direction of the Honourable the East-India Company.

The circumstance of their having but one set of books, originally, in the ship, and one of them being deficient in the only map

which

which could be of service to them in their distress, suggests this reflection---that all Captains should take duplicates of every chart and book which are, or may be, necessary on their voyage; and if one was closely preserved in oiled canvas, or linen, and placed in such a part of the vessel as to be easily come at, in case of an unforeseen accident, it would in all probability, be the means of preserving the very valuable lives of such as are unfortunate enough to be drifted about at the mercy of fortune and the elements.

Before I conclude the Narrative, I conceive it to be my duty to caution the public against any spurious account of the proceedings of me and my shipmates, which may hereafter appear, as the foregoing is the correct copy as sent home from Madras to the Honourable the East-India Company and owners of the Winterton. From a desire to render it still more deserving the perusal of the public, I shall finish with a concise sketch of the situation, manners, laws, and customs, of the natives of the Island of Madagascar, where the wreck took place; and from which, the reader will be enabled to form an idea of the critical situation the people were in, but more especially the females; as passengers, they had

received every sort of indulgence the vessel afforded, previous to the accident, but after they were providentially rescued from the waves, what must have been their feelings when they found themselves on an Island inhabited by man in a complete state of barbarism! In vain did my companions attempt to alleviate their sorrows; for, after struggling hard with their fate, from week to week, they at length fell a prey to the ravages of a malignant fever, far removed from their native country, their friends, and all they held dear!

But to return, Madagascar is the largest of the African islands; it lies between 44 and 51° E. lon. and 12 and 25° S. latitude It is 40 leagues East of the continent of Africa, from which it is separated by the straits of Mosambique. It extends about nine hundred miles from north to south, and is between two and three hundred miles broad; in some places, but in others it is much narrower.

The natives, both male and female, are commonly tall, perfectly well made, and in as much proportion as Europeans; they are generally of a dark olive complexion, and many of the oldest males are nearly of a jet black. Their hair is not woolly, like that of most of the negroes on the coast of Guinea,

Guinea, but it is always of a shining black, and for the most part curls naturally. The hair of the females is not quite so harsh as that of the males, and appears to curl with more taste, probably from their frequent washing and plaiting it at night. Their nose is small, but not diminutive, and what is among the blacks rather uncommon, they have very pretty lips. There are numberless petty kings and chiefs among them, whose only riches consist in cattle and slaves, &c. and are ever so jealous of each other's wealth, that they are engaged in incessant broils and war.

They have no kind of religion, nor do they seem to entertain any other idea of a future state, than that it will be a place of ease and rest, where they'll get food without much fatigue: they have neither temples, bishops, nor priests. The marriage ceremony is also unknown here; for the men and women cohabit for a considerable time, and then leave each other without a cause being assigned by either party; and when they again meet, there is nothing like reproach ever heard between them. There are a great number of locusts, crocodiles, cameleons, and other animals common to the Islands of Africa. The inhabitants of the inland parts, have corn and grapes, and

several

several sorts of excellent honey; together with numerous fine minerals and precious stones; there is a great abundance of fine spring water, particularly along the coast, which proved a delicious treat to the shipwrecked mariners. It seems the French attempted to settle there, at two or three different times, during the American war, but were repulsed with great vigour by the natives, who collected all their forces, and without hearing their offers, or receiving their presents, immediately proceeded to beat them off the Island. There are only some places on the coast yet known to the Europeans, but those already discovered nearly resemble each other, as to manners, customs, people, &c. and only vary in their religious opinions, the most popular of which is, the adoration of the sun.

THE END.

23 JY 69

Hartnell, Printer, 3, New-Street.